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Shuster Supports Troops, Honors Veterans by Supporting Iraq Supplemental Funding Bill

Washington, D.C.— **Congressman Shuster** voted in favor of an emergency war supplemental bill that funds our military and provides important improvements to veterans' educational assistance.

“Today, the House passed long overdue legislation to fund the critical needs of our troops in Iraq and Afghanistan as well as provide for a G.I. bill that honors the sacrifices our veterans have made in the War on Terror.

The new G.I. bill passed today includes everything I was pushing for in the previous bill, without the tax increases that would have smothered small businesses. The new G.I. bill not only increases the amount our veterans receive for educational assistance, it allows our veterans to transfer those benefits to their spouses and children.

Every time I meet with our soldiers and ask them what Congress should do to help them, they tell me that they want to be able to transfer their G.I. benefits to their wives or children. Today's legislation honors that request and I am proud to have voted to make it a reality.”

The Iraq Supplemental was passed in two amendments. The first amendment included \$165 billion in critical funding for the Defense Department to continue military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. The second amendment included \$62.8 billion in a new G.I. bill that expands educational assistance to our veterans. Unlike the G.I. bill passed in the previous supplemental, the legislation passed today allows veterans to transfer their educational benefits to their spouses and children.

- The new G.I. bill provides up to 36 months in lump-sum tuition payments equal to the highest in-state tuition rate in each state, a monthly housing stipend, and a \$1,000 annual stipend for books.
- The Pentagon estimates that it would provide a monthly benefit of approximately \$2,400—a 117% increase over the current allowance.

- Those individuals serving an aggregate of at least 36 months commencing on or after September 11, 2001, or who have been discharged for a service-connected disability after 30 continuous days, would be eligible for the full allowance.

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